3. Soil, water and tree conservation in 12 States and Union Territories of Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram.

4. Social forestry including rural fuelwood plantation in 157 fuelwood deficit districts.

5. Drought Prone Area Development Programme in 615 blocks of 70 districts in 13 States.

6. Desert Development Pragramme in 17 districts of hot desert areas in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana and 4 cold arid districts of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir.

7. Control of shifting cultivation in the Union Territories of Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram.

8. Strengthening of soil survey organisation in the Union Territories of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Goa, Daman & Diu, Mizoram and Pondicherry.

9. Propagation, of water conservation/harvesting technology for dry farming areas in 19 districts of 15 States.

5. Till 1984-85, an area of 29.38 million hectares of the problem areas has been treated at a cost of over Rs. 1200 crores. Besides, Central support is being extended through All India Soil and Land Use Survey for carrying out various types of soil and land use survey by application of modern technology such as Remote Sensing for identification of priority/critical areas for preparation of integrated watershed management plans. In order to provide policy directions on matters concerning the care of soil health and its scientific management National Land Resources Conservation and Development Commission and National Land Board set up in 1983 has been reconstituted as National Land Use and Conservation Board and National Land Use and Wasteland Development Council. National Wastelands Development Board has been set up with the object of bringing under productive use, wastelands in the country through a programme of afforestation. The target for afforestation for 1985-86 is 1.4 million hectares. Similarly, at the State level for coordination of activities of line departments concerning land, including soil and moisture conservation and land improvement. State Land Use Boards have been set up.

6. During the Seventh Five Year Plan, the efforts indicated above are being continued.

Financing of housing projects by financial institutions

683. SHRI T. CHANDRASEKHAR REDDY: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Housing and Urban Development Corporation has invited offers from financial institutions like UTI, HDFC and State Apex Cooperative Societies to co-finance housing projects or finance housing and urban development as a consortium;

(b) if so, what is the respose received from these institutions; and

(c) what is the financial requirement at present for housing projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The response from various institutions is as follows:—

Unit Trust of India:

The Unit Trust of India has indicated their inclination to consider favourably the HUDCO's proposal for re-financing its housing schemes for low paid police personnel.

Housing Development Finance Corporation:

The Corporation has agreed to co-finance, to the extent of Rs. 27 lakhs, two EWS Urban Housing Schemes in

Calcutta and Gujarat. As regards rural housing schemes, the HDFC has preferred to watch the progress of its Rural Housing Corporation set up in Gujarat State.

Scheduled Banks:

The State Bank of Travancore has agreed in principle to meet 30 per cent of the cost of the Rural Housing Project in two districts of Kerala. The share of the Bank comes to Rs. 39.60 lakhs. The Bank of Maharashtra has also allocated a sum of Rs. 50.00 lakhs for co-financing Rural Housing Scheme during 1986.

A proposal has also been sent to Delhi Cooperative Housing Finance Society, but there is no response from them so far.

(c) During the Seventh Plan period, HUDCO tentatively proposes to sanction schemes worth Rs. 1845 crores.

684. [*Transferred to the 28th November, 1985*].

Chambal command area development at Kota

685. SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that progress of second phase of the Chambal Command Area Development at Kota in Rajasthan has virtually stopped; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) The Second Phase of the Chambal Command Area Development Project at Kota in Rajasthan has not as yet been taken up for implementation by the State Government.

(b) Does not arise.

Minorities Commission

686. SHRI RAM NARESH KUSHWAHA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any assessment with regard to the functioning of the Minorities Commission in changing the destiny of the minorities;

(b) whether the Minorities Commission is presently without Members;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether Government propose to wind up the Commission which has almost become defunct?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (SHRIMATI RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI): (a) to (d) The Minorities Commission has so far submitted six Annual Reports out of which four Annual Reports together with the Action Taken Memoranda on the various recommendations have already been laid on the Table of the House. In the light of the reports submitted by the Commission it is not correct to say that the Minorities Commission has become defunct. Minorities Commission had recently organized a seminar on Minorities & Education on 16th & 17th November, 1985. Posts of four Members of the Commission had fallen vacant in the recent past due to expiry of tenure of the Members. One post has since been filled up on the joining of a new Member. There is no proposal before the Government to wind up the Commission.

Banning the use of pesticides

687. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(c) whether a recent study conducted by the IARI has revealed growing dangers to human health and environments with the indiscriminate and increasing use of certain pesti-